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"Why, there was stands there, all glittering in the sun, covered all over with little bits of tin, at halfpence apiece, with gilding on them as bright as gingerbread," said Pat.

"And what were they at all?" said Jem.

"Miraculous medals, Jem," said Pat.

"And did they work miracles?" said Jem.

"Sorrow one, that I could hear of," said Pat.

"And did the people believe there was miracles on that stand, at a halfpenny apiece?" said Jem.

"Well, you see them that bought them had to get them blessed by the missionaries, before there would be any good in them," said Pat.

"And did the missionaries say they were miraculous medals, when they were blessed?" said Jem.

So then Pat pulled a printed paper out of his pocket, and showed it to Jem, with a cross at the top, and "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph," printed under the cross, and, under that again, in big letters, "RESOLUTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF THE MISSION," and then Jem read out of it, "PRAYER OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL—O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee;" and then Pat took out of his pocket a little bit of gilt tin, as big as a sixpence, with the prayer, and the picture of the virgin stamped upon it; "And," said Pat, "here's the miraculous medal, Jem."

So Jem turned it about in his fingers, "And," said he, "do they think the people has got no sense at all? Sure its the height of impudence, it is, to call that miraculous."

"Well, I don't know, Jem," said Pat; "sure when grown childer can be got in plenty to buy the like of that for a miraculous medal, its a most a miracle itself."

"Well, if bits of tin can beat the Bible in the long run, I'll call that a miracle, when I see it"—said Jem. "But did the people take to the medals, Pat?"

"Well, there was lots and lashings of them sold," said Pat, "but I don't think them that got them cared a deal for them; sure I was in Mr. Thomas's bread shop, when a boy come in, and said he had no money, and asked to buy a bit of bread with a miraculous medal, blest and all; and, indeed, Mr. Thomas gave him the bread, and took the medal, so one medal was worth something any way."

"And what was the preaching like, Pat?" said Jem.

"Well, it wasn't like Father John's preaching at all," said Pat, "for they didn't abuse nor blackguard nobody, not even the Scripture-readers; but kept speaking to the people about their sins, and about death and judgment, and heaven and hell, quite solemn and serious, till you'd think that the people was just frightened out of their lives, and ready to look for salvation entirely; and you would see the people's hearts was stirred up in them entirely, for they never heard the like of that preaching in the chapel before; and, I'm thinking, if Father John doesn't mend his hand and try something more Christian-like, he won't go down with the people at all, after that."

"And, Pat, when the people was stirred up to look for salvation," said Jem, "did the missionaries shew them the way of salvation, or did they tell them of the blood of Christ at all?"

"Not one word about it at all, Jem," said Pat, "they just stirred up the people till you would think their minds couldn't be quiet at all about their sins, and then they just left them in the lurch, and didn't give them nothing to make their peace with God."

"And was there nothing about Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners, then?" said Jem.

"Nothing at all," said Pat; "there was plenty said then for the priests, but nothing at all for Christ, the Saviour of sinners! Sure, look at this paper I showed you," said Pat: "here's about death and judgment, and heaven and hell; and here's the Blessed Virgin six times over, and the prayer of the miraculous medal, and plenty of real good advice, and not one word about Jesus Christ, the Saviour, good or bad, first or last; and that's the priest's mission, Jem."

So Jem read the paper over, and he could not find one word about Christ, the Saviour of sinners, in it; and we print that paper (for a copy was sent to us) that our readers may try if they can find anything about Christ in it.

"Well," said Jem, "I think I see now what can come of it."

"And what's that, Jem?" said Pat.

"Well, it's my opinion," said Jem, "that them that's stirred up to think of their sins, and of heaven and hell, will have to look for a saviour and a way of salvation before they can get their minds quiet again—and it's clear they won't get that from priests—and who knows but they may be driv to the Bible for that."

"Well, Jem," said Pat, "I think you are right; sure enough, it's new work the priests are at in preaching that way, and more may come of it than they know of. If they stir the people to think in earnest about sin and their own souls, they'll maybe find they have riz what they can not quell, for they haven't got what will satisfy them that are once in earnest about their own souls; and the Rev. Mr. Burke seemed to think that, too, for he kept writing mighty good letters to the people, showing them where they would find salvation and the way of peace with God, if they want to look for it now."

"But look here, Pat," said Jem, "see, here's a verse out of the Bible, stuck on to the end of the priest's paper; sure that's new anyway." So Jem read the verse—"Who-

soever shall follow this rule, peace on them and mercy.—Galatians ch. vi., ver. 16."

"And what rule was that about," said Pat; "could it be about praying to the Blessed Virgin, and looking to her for salvation, the way it is in this paper?"

So Pat got his Douay Bible, and he read—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor incircumcision, but a new creature. And whosoever shall follow this rule, peace on them and mercy."—Galatians ch. vi., v. 14, 15, 16.

"Now, Pat," said Jem, "see what the rule in the Douay Bible is, to glory in the cross of Jesus Christ, and nothing else, and the promise of peace and mercy is to them that follow that rule. And now see if this paper isn't telling every one to pray to the Blessed Virgin and to look to her for salvation, without one word about Christ the Saviour of sinners; and then they clap on to this rule of their own making the very promise that the Bible makes to them that look to Christ only. Now, isn't that nothing else but turning the word and promise of God himself into a lie?"

"Jem," said Pat, "there's nothing else to be got out of our priests. They haven't the Gospel, and so they won't let us have the Bible; and if we want the Gospel of Jesus Christ we must have the Bible for ourselves to teach us."

We print here the paper which the missionary priests printed and circulated about their mission, that our readers may see for themselves, whether what Pat and Jem said about it was fair and true.

JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH.

RESOLUTIONS AT THE CLOSE OF THE MISSION.

1st. Every day, either at morning or night prayers, I shall repeat and consider these great truths: God sees me, and beholds even the secrets of my heart. I must die, and it may be this very day. After death I must be judged, and woe to me if I be found guilty of mortal sin, not repented of. Then begins Eternity, which I must spend amidst the joys of Heaven or torments of Hell.

2ndly. Every day I shall be exact in saying my morning and night prayers; I shall examine my conscience, I shall repeat the Angelus, say grace before and after meals, read a portion of a pious book (were it only for five or ten minutes), or recite a part of the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin.

3rdly. Every Sunday I shall assist devoutly at Mass, and, if possible, at a Sermon, and I shall read a considerable portion of a pious book; I shall also consider the faults of the past week, and resolve to avoid them this week. Moreover, I shall examine how I have kept these resolutions, and I shall repeat them anew.

4thly. Every month, at least, I shall approach the Holy Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist. But if I should have the misfortune of falling into mortal sin, I shall overcome every inconvenience, in order to go to confession as soon as possible, knowing that a person in mortal sin is liable at any moment, to everlasting damnation.

5thly. I shall avoid most carefully every person, every place, and every thing that would bring me into sin, but above all, such persons, such places, and such things, as have already led me into sin.

6thly. I shall make every effort, with the grace of God, to overcome that temptation which I know by experience to be most dangerous to me.

7thly. Every night I shall repeat the following prayer, to obtain, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the grace of persevering in these resolutions until death:—

PRAYER OF ST. BERNARD.

Remember, O most pious Virgin, that it was never heard of in any age that those who implored, and had recourse to thy powerful protection, were ever abandoned by thee. I, therefore, O Sacred Virgin, animated with the most lively confidence, cast myself at thy sacred feet, most earnestly and fervently beseeching thee to adopt me, though a wretched sinner, for thy perpetual child, to take care of my eternal salvation, and to watch over me at the hour of my death. O do not, mother of the Word Incarnate, despise my prayers, but graciously hear and obtain the grant of my petitions. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL.

O MARY, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

SPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

TO THE PARISHIONERS AT LARGE.—Exact attendance at the public service of religion in the Church, zeal for the becoming style and decoration of the Church, as also for the vestments and other requisites of the altar, respect for the Clergymen, and submission to their advice.

TO THE HEADS OF FAMILIES.—Instruction, vigilance, correction, and above all, good example—prayer in common, proper choice of servants, attention to their religious duties.

TO HUSBANDS AND WIVES.—Affection, mutual forbearance, union and peace—send your children to good schools.

TO CHILDREN.—Love, respect, and obedience to parents—peace, and concord amongst themselves.

TO MEN.—A horror of blaspheming, cursing, swearing, gambling, impure conversation, bad company, drunkenness, and public houses, a love of honesty, the pardon of injuries.

TO WOMEN.—Meekness, patience, charity and attention to the duties of the house.

TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN GENERAL.—To avoid dangerous occasions, wakes, dances, company-keeping, and bad books.

TO YOUNG BOYS.—To avoid dangerous amusements, dread of everything contrary to modesty, to practice pious reading.

TO YOUNG FEMALES.—Modesty, becomingness in dress, humility, particular devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the study and imitation of her virtues.

TO ALL.—A spirit of piety, watchfulness, great distrust in ourselves, and unbounded confidence in God.

"Whosoever shall follow this rule, peace on them and mercy."—GAL. vi. 16.

Whether the prayer in the above paper was really written by St. Bernard, who lived in the 12th century, we do not know; perhaps some of our correspondents can tell us. But we do think it very strange that any prayer of St. Bernard should be put along with the prayer of the miraculous medal, "O Mary, CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN, pray for us, who have recourse to thee," for this reason, that St. Bernard condemned the notion of Mary being conceived without sin, as a FALSE DOCTRINE. If our readers will look to another article in our present number, p. 97, they will find that St. Bernard affirms that this doctrine is "neither supported by reason nor backed by any tradition;" he says it was founded on "an alleged revelation which is destitute of adequate authority." He asks, "How can it be maintained that a conception which did not proceed from the Holy Ghost—not to say that it proceeded from sin—can be holy? or how could they conjure up a holy day on account of a thing that is not holy in itself?" and he says, that the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (which is now celebrated in the Church of Rome) "either honours sin or authorizes a false holiness."

All this St. Bernard wrote; yet the Roman Catholic priests do not scruple to put St. Bernard's name side by side with a prayer, "O Mary, conceived without sin!"

Thus the priests deal with the Fathers; thus they reverence the opinions and authority of the Fathers; but how could we expect them to deal more truly with the Fathers, than they do with Scripture itself?

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We beg to call the attention of our correspondents to the utility of adding their name and address to their communications.

Several papers are now in our possession which we cannot insert without alterations, which we do not feel at liberty to make without the previous concurrence of the writers.

We would request our correspondents, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, to limit the length of their communications, and not to discuss a variety of distinct topics in one letter.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st. To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

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The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, AUGUST, 1854.

SINCE the publication of our last number a Pastoral letter has been published, addressed to the [Roman] Catholic clergy and laity of the diocese of Dublin, on the Feast of the Assumption, signed PAUL CULLEN, Archbishop, &c., which sets forth some matters, to which we think it our duty, as lovers of truth, to call attention.

The document presents so striking an illustration of the tone and style in which it is now the fashion in the Roman Catholic Church to speak of, and address the Blessed Virgin Mary, that, had our space permitted, we should have been glad to have transcribed the whole of it for our readers. Its great length, however, obliges us to content ourselves with merely giving such extracts as appear the most striking, and worthy of remark; leaving it to such of our readers as may desire it, to consult the original letter, which they will find given in full in the *Tablet* of the 5th instant, and in most of the other Roman Catholic journals.

"The Church (says Dr. Cullen) invites us, at this season, to celebrate the Assumption of the Holy Virgin into Heaven: . . . This festival recalls to our recollection the last moments of the great mother of God upon earth, and puts before our eyes the sublime spectacle of her passage into heaven. She passes from the darkness of this world to the regions of eternal bliss . . . where she shall be for all ages—the health of the weak, the refuge of poor sinners, the source of all spiritual graces and favours. Her body, exempted from the lot of the other descendants of Adam, is not condemned to moulder into dust, but, united again with her pure soul, is translated into heaven, and placed at the right hand of the Eternal Son."

Acquainted, as we are, with the intensity of your devotion to the Holy Mother of God, who is the special

* This did actually happen, in the shop of a Protestant.

patroness of this diocese and this city, we need scarcely exhort you to join in this Novena with fervour and zeal, and to celebrate, with the profoundest veneration and the warmest sentiments of piety, the greatest of her festivals. All the honour that we can pay to this great Virgin—to this most holy and exalted of all creatures—is nothing when compared to what is due to the sublimity of her dignity, the extent of her merits, and to the power of her patronage. . . . Choose, says St. Bernard, which you will most admire—the most beneficent condescension of the Son, or the sublime dignity of the Mother. On each side it is a subject of wonder and astonishment—that a God should obey a woman is a humility beyond example—and that a woman command a God is an unparalleled privilege.”

“It is our sad lot to have been born in original sin, and to have inherited from our first parents the maledictions which they brought on themselves by transgressing God's commandments; whilst Mary, by a privilege granted to her alone among all the children of Adam, was conceived free from every stain of sin. Such is the received doctrine of all the Catholic world, and such has it always been. Let us humbly pray that the Holy Pontiff who now fills the chair of St. Peter will soon put the seal of infallibility upon it, by declaring to be a doctrine of the Church what is already, and has been always believed—thus satisfying the pious aspirations of the faithful Christians, who desire to add a new wreath of glory to the diadem of the celestial Queen, and to bring into stronger light the privileges of the most exalted of creatures.”

There are several matters in the above extracts which, we confess, have startled us not a little; and we earnestly beg the attention of our Roman Catholic readers to the calm consideration of them.

That Dr. Cullen should represent the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin to be now the received doctrine of all the Catholic world, while he, in the next sentence, admits that it has never yet been declared to be a doctrine of the Church, is in itself sufficiently strange to any one who has been in the habit of considering that it is the office of the Head of the Church to lead, and not to follow; to teach, and not to be taught, what doctrines ought to be believed by faithful Christians. And if Dr. Cullen be right in asserting that “all the honour we can pay the Virgin Mary is nothing when compared with what is her due, and that the whole world of faithful Christians are agreed in breathing forth their pious aspirations to the holy Pontiff to add this new wreath of glory to the diadem of their celestial Queen, it does, certainly, appear to be somewhat singular that the present Pontiff, as well as all the Popes who have filled the Holy See before him, for the last six or seven hundred years, should have been so long blind to their duty, and so deaf to the prayers and pious aspirations of the whole Catholic world on the subject!

It is rather hard, we think, to believe that the Popes have been the only individuals among the faithful who were reluctant to add a new wreath of glory to the diadem of her whom Dr. Cullen, in the intensity of his devotion, seems never to think he can eulogize sufficiently.

We cannot refrain from giving one other passage:—

“O my brethren, let us not neglect to avail ourselves of this great means of salvation. . . . In our dangers and our difficulties let us invoke the most holy name of Mary. . . . Let us put on the new man, and reform the tenor of our lives, in order that we may approach with confidence the throne of the Holy Virgin, and place ourselves under the shield of her protection. Let us prove that we are the children of the Queen of Angels, by our fervour in the service of God; the children of the Queen of Patriarchs, by our piety; the children of the Queen of Prophets and Apostles, by our zeal; the children of the Queen of Martyrs, by our courage and fortitude; the children of the Queen of Confessors, the children of the Queen of Virgins, the children of the Queen of Mercy,” &c., &c.

“Oh! if we do so, the most Holy Virgin will not abandon us—like a pillar of light, she will go before us and direct our steps; she will defeat the attacks of our infernal enemies; she will strengthen us in our temptations, and obtain for us all the blessings and graces necessary in order to work out our eternal salvation.”

Surely it would be passing strange if every Pope, who ever sat on the throne of St. Peter,

was so hard-hearted as to refuse to add any new gem to the celestial crown of their grand patroness, unless some grave difficulty stood in the way of their doing so; and even if we knew no more of the matter, we confess that this reflection alone would have led us to suspect that Dr. Cullen's statements ought to be received with some little caution, and that, high as his position may be in the Roman Catholic world in Ireland, he is possibly not very accurately informed about the real state of the case, or the causes of the reluctance of the Holy See to satisfy the pious aspirations of the faithful Christians who desire to add this new wreath of glory to the diadem of their queen.

Fortunately, however, we happen to know what Dr. Cullen appears to be ignorant of, or to have forgotten; that, if it be true that it is now the received doctrine of all the Catholic world, that the Virgin was conceived free from every stain of original sin, and “that she never committed,” as he adds, “the slightest fault, and never had to reproach herself with the smallest imperfections,” it is as certainly false that such has always been the received doctrine of all the Catholic world. We should be sorry to suppose that any one in Dr. Cullen's position should be guilty of a wilful misstatement of such magnitude; but we beg his attention, and that of our readers, for a few moments, to the actual state of the case, as demonstrated by authorities, which even Dr. Cullen himself must admit to be irresistible.

We shall begin with St. Bernard—a witness who, singularly enough, Dr. Cullen has himself selected and quoted by name in this Pastoral, and whose notions of the dignity of the Virgin Mary must have been tolerably high, if he speaks of her, as stated by Dr. Cullen, as “a woman commanding a God”—which may, indeed, as he himself says, “well fill us with wonder and astonishment.” We doubt if Bonaventura himself has ever uttered a stronger expression; and the passage seems a worthy companion to that which we cited from the works of that somewhat enthusiastic votary of the Blessed Virgin in our June number, p. 74.*

Now, how stands the actual historic fact. It may be briefly stated thus—So far is it from being true that this doctrine of the Immaculate Conception has always been the received doctrine of all the Catholic world, as asserted by Dr. Cullen, that it is no exaggeration to say that no controversy was ever waged between two great parties within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church with half the violence and bitterness that this disputed doctrine gave rise to. Until the year 1139, or 1140 (though, as an opinion, it may have been held by some individuals as early as the ninth century, and not earlier), it had no place in ecclesiastical ceremonies, or even in the arguments of the learned. About that date, however, A.D. 1139, the Canons of Lyons, in France, ventured to introduce it into the offices of their Church, and instituted a feast in the Church of Lyons in honour of the Immaculate Conception.

St. Bernard, who was then in the height of his fame, and is said by some to have possessed, in his retreat at Clairvaux, more authority in the Christian world than if seated on the throne of St. Peter, lost not a moment in publicly making known his sentiments at the innovation, and stoutly reprobated it with all the earnestness and eloquence of which he was capable. The letter which he addressed to the Church of Lyons on this occasion is contained in his works, vol. i., p. 389 (Paris, 1839), epistle 174, and is well worth Dr. Cullen's careful perusal. He will find there that St. Bernard says, “we can never wonder enough that some of you could have the boldness

to introduce a feast which the Church has not the least knowledge of, which is neither supported by reason nor backed by any tradition. Are we more learned or more devout than the Fathers? It is dangerous presumption to attempt what their wisdom in such things omitted.” He will there find that St. Bernard asserts that the alleged revelation on which some pretended that it was founded, was destitute of any adequate authority, and argues “How can it be maintained that a conception which did not proceed from the Holy Ghost, not to say that it proceeded from sin, could be holy? or how could a holy day be held on account of a thing that is not holy in itself? Willingly would the glorious Virgin be without that honour, by which either sin is honoured or a false sanctity introduced.” And again, p. 389-391—“The royal Virgin has no need of a false honour. And what if others, on the same ground, should assert that feasts in honour of each of her parents are to be defended? And the very same thing some one might exact for her grandfathers and great grandfathers, and so it might be extended *ad infinitum*, and the number of holidays would be without end.”* Well might the learned Du Pin observe on such passages—“Thus it may be observed that St. Bernard had no very favourable thoughts of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary!”

Great, however, as was the authority of St. Bernard, and though the powerful and widely-extended Dominican order, following their famous doctor St. Thomas Aquinas, for centuries combated the new doctrine most vehemently, as *contrary to Scripture and to the tradition of the Church*, and, therefore, contrary to the Catholic faith, the equally influential order of the Franciscans zealously adopted the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and Pope Sixtus IV., himself a Franciscan, threw the whole weight of his authority into the same scale, and issued, in 1483, a Bull, in which he condemned those who called the doctrine a *heresy*, and the celebration of the festival a *sin*—applying, however, an exactly similar condemnation towards the other party, who said it was a *heresy*, or sin, to deny the doctrine—a pretty cogent proof, we think, that, at that time at least, all the Catholic world were not agreed upon the point, as Dr. Cullen now would have the clergy and laity of our Irish metropolis believe. The truth is, the Bulls of Pope Sixtus IV. were as little minded by the Dominicans as the letter of St. Bernard was by the Franciscans, and the controversy raged as fiercely as ever. The annual recurrence of the Feast of the Conception continued for centuries to be the signal of renewed hostilities, and often gave birth to scenes of the most scandalous kind; and even when the doctrine of original sin came to be discussed at the Council of Trent, the debate ran so high between the Dominicans and Franciscans about the Immaculate Conception, that the Pope gave orders to the Papal legates to reconcile the contending parties,

* “Unde miramur satis, quid visum fuerit hoc tempore quibusdam vestrum voluisse mutare colorem optimum, novam inducendū celebritatem, quam ritus Ecclesiæ nescit, non probat ratio, non commendat antiqua traditio? Numquid Patribus doctores aut devotiores sumus? Periculosè præsumimus, quicquid ipsorum in talibus prudentia præterivit.”—Page 389.

“Sed profertur scriptum supernæ, ut aiunt, revelationis. Ipse mihi facile persuadeo scriptis talibus non moveri, quibus nec ratio suppeditat, nec certa invenitur favere auctoritas.”—Page 391.

“Cum hæc ita se habeant, quænam jam erit festivæ ratio conceptionis? Quo pacto, inquam, aut sanctus asseretur conceptus, qui de Spiritu Sancto non est, ne dicam de peccato est? Aut festus habebitur, qui minime sanctus est? Libenter Gloriosa hoc honore carebit, quo vel peccatum honorari, vel falsa videtur induci sanctitas.”

“Virgo regia non eget falso honore Quid si alius propter eandem causam, etiam utrique parenti ejus festos honores asserit defendendos? Sed et avis et proavis idipsum posset pro simili causa quilibet fugitare, et sic tenderetur in infinitum et festorum non esset numerus.”—Page 389-391.

† This decree may be found in the appendix of any of the authorized editions of the Council of Trent.

* As Dr. Cullen does not give any reference to St. Bernard's works we cannot take upon us, at present, to say whether St. Bernard has really said anything so startling; but, for the present, it is not our purpose to dispute Dr. Cullen's quotation.

as far as possible, without giving a triumph to either. The directions were—"Not to meddle in this matter, which might cause a schism among Catholics; to endeavour to maintain peace between the opposing parties, and to seek some means of giving them equal satisfaction; above all, to observe strictly the brief of Pope Sixtus IV., which prohibited preachers from taxing the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception with heresy."* Accordingly, the Council of Trent left the great controversy still undecided; and satisfied itself with declaring, at the close of its decree concerning original sin (Sess. v., sec. 5), that it was not the intention of the Council to comprehend in that decree, the Blessed Virgin Mary, but merely that the constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV. should be observed; which we have given the outline of above;† and the great Roman Catholic controversialist, Bishop Milner, writing more than two centuries later, says—"The Church does not decide the controversy concerning the conception of the Blessed Virgin, and several other disputed points, because she sees nothing absolutely clear and certain concerning them, either in the written or unwritten word; and, therefore, leaves her children to form their own opinions concerning them."

This, we think, accounts satisfactorily for why so many Popes have declined to add this new wreath of glory to the celestial crown of the Queen of Heaven, and leaves no other difficulty unsolved, than the one which startled us so much in reading this magniloquent Pastoral of Dr. Cullen—namely, how it is possible for a divine to hold so distinguished a post in the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, who is either so grossly ignorant of what every tyro in ecclesiastical history knows touching the progress of this much-vexed controversy, or so bold as to cite St. Bernard in almost the same sentence in which he (Dr. Cullen) proclaims as a doctrine which has *always been received by all the Catholic world*, the very doctrine which St. Bernard so earnestly *condemned*, and which for centuries rent the Catholic Church almost to its foundations! We should be glad to know, even at the present day, what the order of St. Dominic have to say upon the matter; and shall feel anxious to learn whether any of our respected Roman Catholic correspondents are disposed to vindicate Dr. Cullen's assertions, or whether they consider them mere rhetorical flourishes to amuse the vulgar, and increase the intensity of their devotion, by practising a pious fraud upon their understanding.

There is another matter set forth in Dr. Cullen's Pastoral which we propose to consider, but which will require a more full investigation than we have space to enter upon in our present number—viz., whether the alleged translation into heaven of the body of the Blessed Virgin, celebrated by the Church of Rome under the name of the Assumption, is a fact established on satisfactory historic evidence, like the translation of Enoch or Elijah, or the ascension of our Blessed Lord, for which we have the unerring testimony of the Holy Scriptures; or whether it is a mere fiction—as we seriously believe it to be—as destitute of real proof as the martyrdom of St. Philomena, St. Theodosia, or St. Ursinus.‡ It will give us much satisfaction if any of our friends will relieve us from the task, by sending us what they consider proof of

the fact; and for the present shall merely say, that as far as our reading goes, we have found no trace, which can be relied on, of even any *tradition* upon the subject, before the time of John Damascenus, a monk of Jerusalem, who flourished some time in the eighth century.

Should none of our Roman Catholic correspondents feel disposed to defend this great festival of their Church, by stating the grounds upon which the Church believes in the Assumption, we shall endeavour to throw what light we can upon the subject in our next number.

Correspondence.

ON INFALLIBILITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—In the remarks on my letter, in the May number of your journal, I find the following sentence—viz., "This paragraph is pervaded by Mr. Rourke's old fallacy, that what is said in Scripture of the Church must necessarily be understood of the Church of Rome—a Church which actually did not exist at the time to which the passage in Acts ii. refers."

In answer to this "rhetorical flourish," I have only to say, that it will be proved in this letter, beyond the power of refutation, that the Church of Rome is the Church of Christ; and, by consequence, what is said in Acts ii. 47, and other parts of the most holy book of the Church, refers to her.

When we say that the Church of Rome is the only true Church, we neither mean the city nor the diocese of Rome; for that is but a part of the true Church; and any Catholic city or diocese in the world is as much a true Church as the city or diocese of Rome. No Catholic, therefore, ever was so weak as to mean this; but their true and only meaning is, that that body, or society of Christians (wherever dispersed, throughout the whole world), which is united in faith and communion with the Bishop of Rome, is alone the true Church of Christ upon earth; and we prove it thus:—

There is but one faith, and one Catholic Church. The first is expressly taught by St. Paul, saying—"One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 5); and we profess the other in the creed, so that, if there be more than one true faith, St. Paul is mistaken; and if there be more than one true Catholic Church, the creed deceives us. And since it is impious to say either the one or the other, it only remains to show, that the Church of Rome is this true Catholic Church, which I prove from this uncontested principle—viz., that there was a true Catholic Church upon earth before the Reformation. For if there was not, it will follow that this article of the creed—"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church" was false for many hundred years together, because the pretended Reformation only began in the year 1517.

Here, then, Mr. Editor, you must do one of these two things. You must either grant that the Church of Rome was this true Catholic Church before the Reformation, or mark out some other visible body or society of men in which the true Church of Christ subsisted before that time. If you grant the first, it is all we can desire; we gain our cause, and the dispute is at an end. For, if the Church of Rome was the true Catholic Church before the Reformation, she is so now, because her faith is the same now as it was then. Besides, it will follow that Protestants separated themselves, and continued separated from the true Catholic Church, which alone suffices to condemn them.

But, if you deny that the Church of Rome was the true Catholic Church before the Reformation, then you are bound to show us some other visible body or society of Christians, in which the true Church subsisted before that time; and to perform this effectually, you are bound to let us know in what part of the world this Church had her being, as, likewise, what particular countries, kings, and bishops were in her communion. And, lastly, you must specify to us the name and diocese of the bishop or bishops of this Church, by whom the first English Protestant bishop was ordained, and from whom the Church of England derives her mission. But this being a task impossible for you to perform, I do not see what other choice there is left you, but either to say that the creed was false for many hundred years before the Reformation, or own that the Church in communion with the See of Rome was the only true Catholic Church before that time. And if she was the only true Catholic Church when Protestants "reformed" her, she is so still, because she has not changed her faith since that time, as I have already observed.

The Nineteenth Article of your creed says:—"The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that, of necessity, are requisite to the same."—Book of Common Prayer.

All this is very true, but altogether unsatisfactory. For if I should ask you, where this true Church, in which the pure Word of God is preached, is to be found?—the article does not answer this question. Yet here lies the knot of the difficulty; and if it be not clearly resolved,

we may easily mistake a false Church for the true one; because all Christian Churches, though ever so opposite to one another, pretend to teach pure and sound doctrine, and to administer the sacraments according to Christ's ordinance. So that the article's account of the Church of Christ is as little to the purpose as if a stranger, inquiring for the best inn upon the road, should be told that the best inn is where there is the best accommodation; for, though this be very true, yet, unless some other marks be given—as the sign of the house, the name of the man that keeps it, and the like—a stranger will be as much at a loss to find it as if nothing were said to him. In like manner, though what the article says concerning the visible Church of Christ—the only true Church—be unquestionable, yet, in respect of the greatest part of mankind, it is of no manner of use to direct them how to distinguish this one true Church from the many false ones that lay claim to it, without certain external marks, whereby it may be clearly known in what particular body or society of men this Church may be found.

Now, listen to St. Augustine, and he will tell us the marks of the Church of Christ, by which all may know her. That holy doctor writes thus against the Manichees:—"Not to speak of that wisdom which you do not believe to be in the Catholic Church, there are many other things which most justly hold me in her communion.—1. The agreement of people and nations holds me. 2. Authority, begun with miracles, nourished with hope, increased with charity, confirmed by antiquity, holds me. 3. A succession of bishops, from the See of St. Peter—to whom Christ, after his resurrection, committed his flock—to the present episcopacy, holds me. 4. And, lastly, the very name of Catholic holds me, of which this Church alone has, not without reason, so kept the possession that, though all heretics desire to be called Catholics, yet, if a stranger asks them where Catholics meet, no heretic dare point out his own house or his own Church."—Con. Epist. Fund., c. 4.

These, sir, were the external marks by which St. Augustine distinguished the true Catholic Church from false ones, and which held him steadfast in her communion—viz., 1. The agreement of people and nations. 2. The evidence of miracles. 3. A continued succession of bishops, from St. Peter, the first Bishop of Rome, to him who then sat in the apostolic chair. And, 4. The name of Catholic, attributed to the true Church by the creed itself. Let us now see to what Church these marks can be appropriated.

The first—viz., the agreement of people and nations, may justly be called the distinctive mark of the Church in communion with the See of Rome. For, though all nations never were in her communion at one and the same time; yet there is scarce a nation in the known world but has been in her communion some time or other. All the "reformed" nations in Europe were in her communion for many hundred years; and so was the whole Greek Church until the middle of the ninth century. In St. Augustine's time, though there were yet many heathen nations, there was scarce a Christian nation under the sun but was in her communion. And, excepting Russia alone, which received its Christianity from the schismatical Greeks, it cannot be shown that any one people or nation, which, upon its conversion, was not immediately united in faith and communion with the See of Rome. Now, I presume, no reformed Church will pretend to anything like this. It is, therefore, evident to common sense, that the agreement of people and nations, which is St. Augustine's first external mark of the true Church, cannot, according to his meaning, be appropriated to any but the Church of Rome. And, even at this time, when so many Churches are cut off from her by heresy and schism, her communion alone is more extended than any one, I might say, than all, the reformed Churches together.

The second mark—viz., the evidence of miracles, belongs also in so peculiar a manner to the Church of Rome, that no Protestant communion ever had the confidence to lay claim to it. On the contrary, most Protestants have thought it their best way to despise and ridicule miracles, just as the fox in the fable pretended the grapes were sour, when he could not come at them.

But the third mark—viz., a perpetual succession of bishops and pastors, derived from the Apostles—never was denied to the Church of Rome, by any man of learning. Indeed, Protestant bishops lay no claim to any such succession but by the Church of Rome. Because, without the interposition of a long catalogue of Popish bishops to make up their ecclesiastical pedigree, there is a gap of near one thousand five hundred years between the Apostles and the first Protestant bishop that ever was in the world. However, even that will not render them any substantial service; for, supposing the validity of their ordination—which, yet, was never granted—unless they can also bring down their mission, in a lineal descent, from the Apostles, and can show that Protestants have, within their own communion, a continued succession of it from them (which is somewhat more than they ever pretended to), their Church will never be admitted into the apostolical family.

Catholicity, or the fourth mark of the true Church, will be treated of in my letter of next month. I hope all my letters will soon appear in the LAYMAN.

"O happy Church (says Tertullian), to which the Apostles poured out all doctrine with their blood! Whom

* F. Paul Sarpi Hist. Conc. Trid., lib. ii., c. 68.

† "Declarat tamen hæc ipsa Sancta Synodus, non esse sue intentionis, comprehendere in hoc decreto, ubi de peccato originali agitur, beatam et immaculatam Virginem Mariam, Dei genetricem, sed observandas esse constitutiones fel. rec. Sixti Papæ IV. sub penis in eis constitutionibus contentis, quas innovat." (Sess. v., s. 5., 17th June, 1546).

‡ As to the former of these worthies, we refer our readers to the May number of our journal (p. 58); and as to the two latter, they will find some notice in our present number (p. 92).